



News Release

**Bass Lake Ranger District
57003 Road 225
North Fork, CA 93643**

**Contact: Burt Stalter
Fuels Management Specialist
559-877-2218 ext. 3208**



October 31, 2014

BASS LAKE RANGER DISTRICT FALL/WINTER/SPRING FUELS BURNING PROGRAM

"The Bass Lake Ranger District, Sierra National Forest, is preparing to implement the fall/winter burning program," said District Ranger Dave Martin. "Projects will consist of three activities: pile burning, broadcast, and underburning."

"The objective of underburning is to reintroduce low intensity fire to the ecosystem" said Martin. "Prior to European settlement, lightning and Native Americans provided ignition sources resulting in a short interval fire regime of low to moderate intensity fires. These frequent fires maintained surface fuels at low levels and reduced small trees and other vegetation in the understory that could form fuel ladders, which are conducive to crown fires. It is believed that under these conditions, ecosystems were more resistant to high intensity, stand replacing fires such as the recent French Fire. In addition to reducing the risk of uncharacteristically severe wildfires, underburning improves wildlife habitat by promoting the sprouting of grass and shrub forage species."

Multiple underburning projects are proposed for the fall/winter/spring of 2014-15. The Timberloft & Lone Sequoia Underburns are located west of Highway 41 near the Westfall Fire Station in the Miami Creek drainage. The Source-Kinsman Underburn is located south and west of Clearwater station in the upper Clearwater Creek drainage. The Foster Underburn is located along the 7S07 Rd to the west of Clearwater Station in the Fish Creek drainage. The Greys Mountain Underburn is located south and east of Sivals Meadow along the 6S11Rd and the Batterson and Jerseydale Administrative burns are located at each of these ranger stations. Burning will be conducted in moderately unstable atmospheric conditions and on Burn Days to provide optimum smoke dispersal. Burning will stop if smoke dispersion becomes a problem and suppression tactics employed if necessary. Stump holes and logs may be mopped up to reduce the smoldering phase of combustion. High use roads will be monitored for visibility hazards, and traffic control will be provided when necessary.

Pile burning objectives are to remove fuels created during timber harvest, reforestation, and fuels reduction in high value areas such as along Wildland Urban Intermix and Nelder Grove Historical Area. The removal of these fuels provides a benefit by reducing the potential of a wildfire that would cause damage to wildlife habitat, watersheds, and private property.

Pile burning projects are widely dispersed throughout the Ranger District. While many of the projects are located at the higher elevations of the district, some are near populated

areas, and may result in a temporary reduction in air quality in the communities of Oakhurst, Fish Camp, Bass Lake,

Ahwahnee, North Fork, and surrounding areas. Burning will be conducted on Burn Days as determined by the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District, and the Mountain

Counties Air Pollution Control District which covers Mariposa County. Burn Day determinations are based on atmospheric conditions which provide optimum smoke dispersal, however, normal diurnal wind changes allow the settling of drift smoke in basins and drainages during the late night and early morning hours. By limiting the number of piles ignited at one time, and by "mopping up" (extinguishing) smoldering piles it is expected that emissions will not reach unacceptable levels. Actions to reduce visibility hazards include monitoring high use roads and providing traffic control if necessary.

For questions or further information, please contact District Fuels Specialist Burt Stalter at 559-877-2218, extension 3208 at the Bass Lake District Headquarters in North Fork.

Follow the Sierra National Forest on Twitter at www.twitter.com/SierraNF and Like the Sierra National Forest on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/SierraNF. Visit our website at www.fs.usda.gov/sierra

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

2015 Pile Burn Plan-Vicinity Map

